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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News  
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Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees, and  
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Headline: Clinton Endorses Bill of Rights  
WASHINGTON - On November 20, President Bill Clinton endorsed the Health  
Care  
Consumer Bill Of Rights and Responsibilities recommended by the Advisory  
Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care  
Industry.

This Bill of Rights and Responsibilities is a comprehensive and  
thoughtful  
document that will function as a guide as we move through the transition  
in  
health care delivery.  
In accepting the recommendations, the President: (1) challenged all  
private  
health plans to adopt the Commission's Consumer Bill Of Rights; (2)  
called  
on Congress to pass appropriate Federal protections into law; and (3)  
directed every federal agency that administers or manages health plans to  
adopt the protections of the Bill of Rights and to advise where they need  
additional legislative authority to do so.  
The Secretary of Defense is required to report through the Vice President  
to  
the President on Department of Defense compliance with the Bill of Rights  
as  
directed by February 19, 1998.  
The Commission's consumer bill of rights consists of the following:

(1) Access to Accurate, Easily Understood Information about health plans, facilities and professionals to assist consumers in making informed health care decisions;

(2) Choice of Health Care Providers that is sufficient to ensure access to appropriate high quality care. This right includes providing consumers with complex or serious medical conditions access to specialists, giving women access to qualified providers to cover routine women's health services, and ensuring continuity of care for consumers who are undergoing a course of treatment for a chronic or disabling condition;

(3) Access to Emergency Services when and where the need arises. This provision requires health plans to cover these services in situations where a prudent layperson could reasonably expect that the absence of care could place their health in serious jeopardy;

(4) Participation in Treatment Decisions including requiring providers to disclose any incentives -- financial or otherwise -- that might influence their decisions, and prohibiting gag clauses that restrict health care providers' ability to communicate with and advise patients about medically necessary options;

(5) Assurance that Patients are Respected and Not Discriminated Against, including prohibiting discrimination in the delivery of health care services based on race, gender, ethnicity, mental or physical disability, and sexual orientation;

(6) Confidentiality provisions that ensure that individually identifiable medical information is not disseminated and that provide consumers the right to review, copy, and request amendments to their medical records;

(7) Grievance and Appeals Processes for consumers to resolve their differences with their health plans and health care providers -- including an internal and external appeals process; and

(8) Consumer Responsibilities provisions that ask consumers to take responsibility by maximizing healthy habits, becoming involved in health care decisions, carrying out agreed-upon treatment plans, and reporting fraud.

The Commission will submit its final comprehensive report on creating a quality framework to the President, through the Vice President, on March 30, 1998.

Headline: SECDEF Announces Summit On Reserve Health Care

WASHINGTON -- Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced Nov. 18 the formation of a Reserve Health Care Summit to address the full spectrum of health care issues and entitlements.

"To achieve a seamless force, we must update our medical policies to ensure

that they support mission requirements as we enter the 21st Century," said

Cohen. "This summit is another step toward further integration." The summit

will be conducted in three phases and hosted by Deborah R. Lee, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs in conjunction with Dr. Edward D.

Martin, acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

The summit has three overreaching goals:

- Reach consensus on reserve component health-care related requirements;

- Identify who will be responsible and accountable within Department of Defense (DoD) for meeting those requirements, and

- Identify how those requirements are budgeted within DOD.

"We need to find practical solutions to the most pressing health care

problems confronting today's reservists," Lee said. "This summit will help

us do that by formulating a plan to meet both the immediate and long-term health care needs of reserve component members."

For more information, contact Lt. Col. Terry Jones at (703) 695-3620, in

the office of the Assistant Secretary Of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

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Headline: 1997 AMSUS Award Winners Make Navy Proud

The Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) only recognizes the best of the best in federal health care.

The 1997 AMSUS has cited the outstanding abilities of three Navy Officers and one Naval researcher.

LCDR Randall N. Hyer, MC, received the Donald F. Hagen Young Physician

Award. This award is given to an individual to recognize early accomplishments and demonstrated future potential in federal health care leadership. Hyer has consistently demonstrated his ability as a visionary

officer of remarkable capability. He is in the final practicum year at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

LCDR Stephen B. Symonds, MSC was awarded the Walter P. McHugh Award in

recognition for his unwavering dedication to duty, true concern for customer

support, and significant contributions in modernizing medical logistics business practices. He is currently stationed at the U.S. Army Medical

Materiel Center, Europe in Pirmasens, Germany, serving as Chief, Customer Support Division.

The Mary J. Nielubowicz Award went to LCDR Elizabeth Abel, NC. Abel, a reservist, received this award for her outstanding paper, "Sexual Risk Behaviors Among Ship and Shore Based Navy Women." She is attached to the Irregular Ready Reserve.

Dr. Stephen Nice, scientific director of the Naval Health Research Center

in San Diego was awarded the Sir Henry Welcome Medal and Prize for his medical research on U.S. Navy Prisoners of War in Vietnam. The award winning paper was entitled "Long-term Health Outcomes Effects of Torture Among U.S. Navy Prisoners of War in Vietnam."

Congratulations to each of the AMSUS award recipients for their outstanding accomplishments.

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Headline: New Clinic Going Up in Key West

Key West, FL - Ground was broken on November 24 for the construction of a new joint Naval Branch Medical Clinic, Naval Branch Dental Clinic and Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

Featured speakers at the ground breaking were RADM W. H. Snell, DC, Chief of the Dental Corps; RADM K. F. Delaney, Commander, Naval Base, Jacksonville; and Dr. Robert Roswell, Director of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities.

The new 59,000 square feet structure will combine three separate facilities and replace a building constructed in 1941.

"The 56 year old building is structurally unsound. It would cost more to refurbish the old building than it will to replace it," said LCDR W.H. Kreceman, MSC, administrative officer, Naval Branch Medical Clinic.

The new two story building will have a main clinic that will house the

Naval Branch Medical Clinic, with both family medicine and military medicine

sections on the first floor. The second floor will house the Naval Branch Dental Clinic as well as administrative spaces for the Medical Clinic.

Two one-story extensions to the main building will contain the Ancillary

service areas of pharmacy, radiology, laboratory and the Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

The new clinic is expected to open by mid-1999.

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Headline: Do You Have A Year 2000 Problem?

Is the computer age ready for the millennium?

Industry sources estimate that up to half of all computers being sold in the United States are not Year 2000 (Y2K) compliant.

To be Y2K compliant a computer has to have the information technology to accurately process date/time data including, but not limited to, calculating, comparing, and sequencing before, after and into the year 2000.

In November 1996, a team was developed under the direction of CAPT Paul Tibbits, Chief Information Officer of the Navy Medical Department, to ensure that Navy Medicine would not be adversely impacted by the potential problems of the year 2000.

The team has developed a worldwide web-based year 2000 assessment guide for

Navy Medical Department Field Activities. This guide has information and links to various sites dealing with Year 2000 compliance testing.

The address to the guide is

<http://www.nmimc.med.navy.mil/year2000/manual.htm>.

If a computer is found to be non-compliant the web site will suggest software to run to correct the problem.

"There is always a chance that Year 2000 problems may occur. But we are working to eliminate that chance," said Michael Slaughter, Y2K action officer, Navy Medical Information Management Center.

Department of Defense and Navy policy is that all new information technology purchases must be Y2K compliant. Activities purchasing information technology products should include language in the solicitation

documents and contracts to ensure that vendors comply with this policy.

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#### Headline: TROA Alert

If something sounds too good to be true it usually is.

An e-mail message has been going out to members of The Retired Officers Association (TROA) that proclaims, "You are eligible to apply for tax refunds that could be worth thousands of dollars to you!" The

e-mail message is intended for military retirees receiving Veterans Assistance (VA) "disability income," and urges them to pass the e-mail along to others.

TROA is not associated in any way with the e-mail message and has not provided TROA members' addresses to anyone for such a purpose.

The e-mail message refers the addressee to an Internet site; if you log on to the site, you've got to read the fine print to find out that the site owner wants you to pay \$100 for the use of any information from the site.

The sender claims to have identified a "little known

Treasury regulation" that authorizes tax refunds for disability retirees. Personnel affairs and government relations experts -- who track such laws and regulations carefully -- know of no such special refund authority.

The sender of the message is simply "packaging" and selling information that is readily available from other sources, including public sources.

The e-mail message is not associated with or endorsed by TROA. If you should receive such a message beware and don't pass it on.

TROA members with questions should refer them to their local TROA office.

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#### Headline: Naval Institute Sponsors Shooting War

Annapolis, MD - Amateur and professional photographers are invited to take

aim for the 36th annual Naval and Maritime Photo contest.

The Naval Institute will award cash prizes of \$500, \$350, and \$250 to the photographers of the top three entries.

All photos submitted for the contest must pertain to a naval or maritime

subject. Photo can be submitted in black and white prints, color prints, or

color transparencies with a minimum acceptable print size of 5" x 7".

Transparencies must be in 35-mm format.

Entries must include a caption and the photographer's name, telephone

number, social security number, and address printed or typed on a separate

sheet of paper.

Photos are not limited to those taken during this calendar year.

However,

entries may not have been previously published, and winners may not be published prior to publication in the monthly magazine Proceedings.

There

is a limit of five entries per person. Entries must be postmarked on or before 31 December 1997. Mail entries to: Naval and Maritime Photo

Contest,

U.S. Naval Institute, 118 Maryland Ave., Annapolis, MD 214402-5035.

Winning photos will be published in the April 1998 issue of Proceedings.

Photos that are not awarded prizes may be purchased. Send a self-addressed

stamped envelope with entries to have photos returned.

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#### Headline: TRICARE Q & A

Question: As a TRICARE Prime enrollee, what can I do if I need non-emergency health care while I'm on vacation?

Answer: If you should need non-emergency medical care while you're

away from home, it will be covered, providing you obtain prior approval from your Primary Care Manager using a special toll-free number located on the back of your enrollee card. Care authorization is required for all routine medical care received out of the area or at another facility.

Members should contact their local TRICARE service center for more information.

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#### Headline: Healthwatch: Nutritious Reading Benefits Health

One of the most important guidelines for wise food shopping is to read food labels carefully. Most food labels provide a list of ingredients, and many also give additional information about the nutritional value of the contents.

The nutrients listed often include calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium, protein, other vitamins, and minerals.

When looking at any list of ingredients, remember that ingredients are in order of their relative weight. The first ingredient is the one that makes up the greatest part of the product. The last ingredient on the list represents the smallest part of the product, and the others represent amounts in between.

Food labels provide nutritional information for a typical single serving rather than for the entire package or can, unless, of course, that makes up one serving. The serving size is an important measurement, since not all people eat the same amount of food at a single setting. Try to gauge how close the serving size is to your own eating habits in order to calculate how many nutrients you'll be receiving at each meal.

Food labels also show the amount of certain nutrients per serving along with the "percent Daily Value" (DV). The DV is based on a 2,000-calorie diet and is the percentage of each nutrient believed to meet the needs of the average person each day. For example, if a certain food provides 50 percent of the DV for vitamin C, one serving gives a person half the vitamin C needed per day.

The little bit of time you spend reading labels at the supermarket can yield tremendous health benefits. Compare brand names to find the highest nutritional value at a reasonable cost. If a favorite food doesn't have nutritional information on the label, write to the manufacturer and ask for a list of nutrients. Finally, don't forget to read the lists of nutrients

that may be posted near fresh, unprocessed foods, such as in the butcher and produce sections of many supermarkets. You'll soon become an expert in filling your nutritional needs.

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail <mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil>, telephone 202/762-3218 (DSN 762-3218), or fax 202/762-3224.